



# JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

James L. Clifford, Editor—William L. Payne, Ass't. Editor

610 Philosophy Hall, Columbia University,  
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For the summer your editor's address is R.F.D., East Wallingford, Vermont. Please address all communications to him here. Although he is to be on sabbatical leave from Columbia all next year — in England during the autumn and early winter — it is hoped that somehow the *JNL* will continue to appear regularly. If all of you will help by sending in notes, queries, bits of news of every kind, there will be no difficulty, for John Middendorf, our Ass't Editor, will carry on as usual in New York, seeing the issues through the Press.

One idea that has occurred to us is that we might dragoon some loyal subscribers into acting as special Guest Editors for one or two of the numbers. What do you think of this possibility? Any volunteers? And are there any bicentenaries, or other events, which ought to be celebrated, or which might be worthy a special number? We are eager for suggestions of all kinds.

## Boswelliana

Since our last number there have been several changes in plans for publishing the next volumes of McGraw-Hill's Boswell edition. As Edward Aswell informs us, it was decided that the material for the *Journal of the Grand Tour* was too extensive to be put in one volume; instead it will be divided into two parts: "the first, which will cover Holland, Germany, and Switzerland, will come out in the spring of next year, probably in March. The second volume, covering Italy, Corsica, France, and Boswell's return to Great Britain, will be published in the fall of 1952, probably in October. Professor Pottle plans to draw on a great deal of the collateral

material -- the letters, memoranda, and the like -- to illuminate passages in the journal itself."

A contract has been signed with Hachette in Paris for a French-language edition of the *London Journal*. There will also be a Swedish translation, the publisher being Bokforlaget Natur och Kultur of Stockholm.

We are greatly indebted to Rolv Laache in Oslo for a sheaf of reviews of the *London Journal* from various Scandinavian papers. Your editor wishes he were a better linguist, so that he could browse through them with more ease. We will gladly lend them for awhile to any of our readers better equipped. There is a feature article in the Stockholm *Dagens Nyheter*, for December 24, and also a long review by Herbert Tingsten (reprinted in the Oslo *Altenspostens* for January 25). In addition there is a review by Lorentz Eckhoff (whom we had recently the pleasure of meeting in New York) in the Oslo *Dagbladet* for April 10; and one by Ole Brandstrup in an unidentified Danish newspaper for December 5.

A clipping from *The Bookseller* of April 21 tells of the filming by Twentieth-Century Fox at their studio at Denham in England of "The Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson." The actor taking the part of Boswell is shown in his costume, so that it would appear that the film is actually in progress. Alas! this is all we can tell you at the moment, for our researches, up to this time, have dug up no further details.

In referring to Boswell's difficulty following his affair with Louisa, Dr. Fritz Talbot wonders how Boswell's life would have been modified, if at all, had he had available the new antibiotic medicines which are now so successful in curing this disease.

Some of you may not know that Evelyn Eaton's novel *In What Torn Ship* (1944) has to do with the adventures of Paoli in Corsica. Some of the information comes, of course, from Boswell.

### Collector's Progress

One of the most attractively printed as well as one of the most entertaining books we have seen in a long time is Wilmarth Lewis's *Collector's Progress*, just published by Knopf. What a delight, in this age of prohibitive publishing costs, to find a book with wide, spacious margins, and with 24 illustrations!

Although some of the chapters have been adapted from articles which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the book is in no sense

merely a collection of reprinted essays. Much is completely new, and all the rest has been re-worked to suit the general plan. It is the tale of a quarter of a century of search for Walpoliana the world over — using all the devices of the modern literary detective — told with all the wit and spice of Horace himself. Each of you is sure to find a favorite story, but for us there is nothing more amusing than the uproarious account of the fabulous Richard Bentley of The Mere, Upton, Slough. But we won't spoil your enjoyment of "Lefty's" anecdotes by telling any more.

Years ago your editor fell under the spell of a book which changed his life, which made him hit the sawdust trail of book-collecting. That was A. Edward Newton's *Amenities of Book-Collecting. Collector's Progress* is just that sort of a book, and we like to think that it will do for this generation what Newton's did for the 1920's. In any event, it should be perfect summer reading for everyone interested either in book-collecting or the 18th century — or more happily in both.

### New Edition of *Thraliana*

It is good news that the two volumes of Mrs. Thrale-Piozzi's journal — *Thraliana* — are now available again. Originally printed by Clarendon during the war, the first edition was soon exhausted and became a rarity. During the past few years, indeed, it was almost impossible to find. We have heard of one set which sold for \$75, and we know of a number of ardent collectors who reported that no copies were to be had at any price. Many university libraries were without this valuable reference work. Now happily all this is past, and the work is again in print, photographically reproduced, but with some corrections and minor additions. You can now see to it that your library has a set — 1191 pages of amusing anecdotes, morbid introspection, shrewd characterizations of her contemporaries, silly comments, acute reflections, and spiteful gossip. All in all, it would be difficult to find a more varied fare, and one more entertaining to dip into or to consult. Superbly edited by Katharine Balderston, it is one of the major reference works for late 18th-century literary gossip.

### Great Letters Series

Farrar, Straus and Co., publishers, have embarked on a

new project — a Great Letters Series — with Louis Kronenberger as General Editor. Kronenberger, indeed, has been the guiding spirit from the start. As an 18th-century enthusiast, he has naturally a taste for great letter writing, and has long thought that more critical study should be given to letters as literature. The present series is designed to provide attractive selections from the correspondences of men and women noted as letter writers, not merely the letters of great persons. And with each selection there will be a significant critical Introduction, something more than a mere perfunctory Preface.

The first volume to appear is a volume of Keats's letters, with an admirable Introductory essay by Lionel Trilling (if the series can keep up to the standard of this first essay, it will be on a very high level indeed). Early in the fall, we understand, the second of the series will appear — the Letters of William Cowper, with an Introduction by Mark Van Doren. Following that, we may expect a selection from Thomas Gray, with a critical examination by Joseph Wood Krutch; and then the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, with a discussion by Kronenberger himself. As you see, the 18th century will loom large in the series, as it should. If the first volumes are as successful as we will all hope they will be, more writers of the century will soon be included.

### Johnsonian Publications

Since we are to review them elsewhere, we will do no more here than to say that volumes V and VI of the Hill-Powell edition of the *Life* live up to all expectations. L.F. Powell has done a superb job in re-editing the *Tour to the Hebrides*, which badly needed scholarly study, and in revising Hill's huge index. These are indispensable volumes for all Johnsonians.

On December 8, 1950, Peter Pineo Chase, a surgeon in Providence, R.I. Island, and one of our good friends and most loyal subscribers, read a paper before the Beaumont Medical Club on "The Ailments and Physicians of Dr. Johnson." This paper was printed in the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* for April, 1951. What must have been his surprise to find this sober medical analysis suddenly publicized in *Time* magazine for June 4. Just why *Time* suddenly became interested in Dr. Johnson's physical ailments — the presumably anoxic condition of the new born child, the causes of his scrofula — we cannot explain. The workings of the *Time* mind are often strange and marvelous

to behold. But we welcome with enthusiasm this publicizing of a sound, serious article, since we are always pleased to have something valid and authoritative made into "news." If the current Boswell vogue can drive *Time* editors into discussing Johnson's dropsy, then hurrah!

C.A. Miller (Vice-President of the Short Lines Railroad Ass'n in Washington D.C.) has privately printed a 39-page brochure entitled *Sir John Hawkins: Dr. Johnson's Friend-Attorney-Executor-Biographer: A Reorientation of The Knight, The Lady, and Boswell*. In it he takes up the cudgels for Sir John, something not many Johnsonians have ever felt inclined to do. In this regard, we might mention that Percy Scholes's biography of Hawkins is nearing completion. We look forward to it eagerly.

A few recent articles may here be listed: two notes by D.J. Greene, "Gibbon Cites Johnson" and "Bolingbroke in Johnson's 'Dictionary'" in *N&Q* for March 31; Wilson M. Hudson, "Whitaker's Attack on Johnson's Etymologies" in the *Huntington Library Quarterly* for May.

### Queries

Charles Bennett, of the Yale Walpole Factory, writes about a passage in a letter from Hannah More to Horace Walpole of 27 July 1789, thanking him for his printing of her "Bishop Bonner's Ghost." She wrote: "...to borrow Mrs. P—'s elegant and favourite phrase, 'It is so comical somehow, there is no telling.' Nay, I am in imminent danger of falling in love with my own verses, for I look at them, and admire them as if they were any other body's — Madame P— again!"

Bennett assumes that Hannah More is alluding to Mrs. Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections*, which Walpole delighted in disparaging, but after a hasty search he cannot find examples of the exact expressions which Miss More refers to as habitual. He wonders if he has somehow missed the proper quotations, or if they appear elsewhere in Mrs. Piozzi's works. Frankly, your editor cannot help, but gladly passes on the query to the rest of you. Is Hannah merely improvising from her general memory of Mrs. Piozzi's style? Bennett adds the postscript: "Perhaps we should jointly offer a prize — say a copy of the 19th edition of Hannah More's *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain* — to the first reader of *JNL* who finds one of the exact phrases."

John Butt (Univ. of Durham at Newcastle-upon-Tyne) writes that he is working on a revision of Vol. IV of the Twickenham edition of Pope, and adds: "If you or your colleagues have noted anything that needs correction — and I am aware of a great deal — could you send it to me fairly soon?"

Raymond Havens (Johns Hopkins) writes: "Is the first 'k' in Birkbeck Hill silent, as I was told (I think at Pembroke College) years ago?" He hears it pronounced by various British scholars and wonders what is correct.

### Books about the Eighteenth Century Still in Print

At the instigation of Edward Hooker and John Butt, we began last August to print lists from various publishers of scholarly books having to do with our period which still can easily be obtained. In particular, readers abroad have welcomed such information. Through the kindness of Ted Hilles, we now include available 18th-century books published by the Yale University Press. These can be procured by teachers of English at the usual 20% discount.

Becker, C.L., *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers* (2.50)

Blanchard, F.T., *Fielding the Novelist* (5.00)

Copeland, T.W., *Our Eminent Friend Edmund Burke* (4.00)

Cranford, J.R., *Lovely Peggy* (a play concerning Peg Woffington) (1.25)

Hasselgrave, R.A., *Lady Miller and the Bathaston Literary Circle* (2.00)

Lewis, W.S., *Three Tours through London in the Years 1748, 1775, 1797* (2.50)

Pierce, F.E., *Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation* (3.00)

Tinker, C.B., *Essays in Retrospect* (2.50)

Tinker, C.B., *Essays Presented to. The Age of Johnson* (5.00)

Williams, S.T., *Richard Cumberland, His Life and Dramatic Works* (3.25)

Wimsatt, W.K., Jr., *Philosophic Words* (3.75)

#### *Yale Studies in English:*

Adams, E.N., *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566 to*

## 1800 (2.00)

- Caskey, J.H., *The Life and Works of Edward Moore* (2.00)  
 Foerster, D.M., *Homer in English Criticism* (3.00)  
 Hammond, L.V.D.H., *Laurence Sterne's Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (3.75)  
 Lowery, M.R., *Windows of the Morning. A Critical Study of William Blake's Poetical Sketches, 1783* (3.00)  
 MacLean, K., *Agrarian Age: A Background for Wordsworth* (3.00)  
 Martz, L.L., *The Later Career of Tobias Smollett* (3.00)  
 Pitman, J.H., *Goldsmith's Animated Nature* (2.00)  
 Small, M.R., *Charlotte Ramsay Lennox: An Eighteenth Century Lady of Letters* (2.50)

## Bibliographies:

- Hazen, A.T., *A Bibliography of Horace Walpole* (12.00)  
 Hazen, A.T., *Samuel Johnson's Prefaces and Dedications* (3.00)  
 Sale, W.M., Jr., *Samuel Richardson: A Bibliographical Record of Richardson's Career with Historical Notes* (5.00)

## Editions:

- Selections from the Symbolic Poems of Blake*, ed. F.E. Pierce (2.00)  
*Fielding's Tragedy of Tragedies*, ed. J.T. Hillhouse (3.00)  
*Memoirs of ... Martinus Scriblerus*, ed. C. Kerby-Miller (5.00)  
*Horace Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting in England, 1760-95*, ed. F.W. Hilles and P.B. Daghlian (3.00)  
 The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed. W.S. Lewis  
*Correspondence with Rev. William Cole*, two vols. (20.00)  
*Correspondence with Madame DuDeffand*, six vols. (60.00)  
*Correspondence with George Montagu*, two vols. (20.00)  
*Correspondence with Mary and Agnes Berry*, two vols. (20.00)  
*Correspondence with Thomas Gray*, two vols. (20.00)  
 (The complete edition will consist of approximately fifty volumes)

## Guggenheim Fellowships

In the list of Guggenheim Fellowships for next year the following are concerned with our period: Mildred Lucile Campbell (Vassar) "English Emigration in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries"; William Dougald MacMillan (N.C.) "The Dramatic Works of John

Dryden"; Joyce Hemlow (McGill) "The Writings of Fanny Burney"; James L. Clifford (Columbia) "A Study of the Youth of Dr. Samuel Johnson"; Thomas W. Copeland (Chicago) "Edmund Burke's Writings on the French Revolution"; George Winchester Stone (George Washington) "History of Dramatic Performances in London"; René Wellek (Yale) "History of Literary Criticism"; Herbert Dieckmann (Harvard) "Studies on the Development and Structure of Diderot's Thought"; Andre Benjamin De-latre (U. of Pa.) "Research on the Correspondence between Voltaire and the Brothers Tronchin."

### Some Recent Publications

From E.S. de Beer, who was responsible for having it reprinted, comes a fascinating guide-book (written in French) to late 17th-century London. It is *Le Guide de Londres* (1693) by F. Colsoni, edited with a commentary by Walter H. Godfrey, and printed for the London Topographical Society by the Cambridge University Press. It will be invaluable for those who wish to know their old London better.

From Bertrand Davis in Bristol comes a present of a little 36-page pamphlet entitled *Fobias Smollett* by Laurence Brander. It has been published for the British Council and sells for 1/6. So far, this is the only 18th-century monograph to be included in the British Council series.

In *Country Neighborhood* (Faber and Faber) R.W. Ketton-Cremer prints the letters of Patrick St. Clair, a well-to-do parson in 18th-century Norfolk.

The most recent issue of the Augustan Reprint Society is Frances Reynolds's *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Taste, and the Origin of Our Ideas of Beauty, etc.*, with an Introduction by your editor. It has long been known that Sir Joshua's sister wrote an essay on taste, which Johnson criticized in a well known letter, but which was never officially published. Recently evidence has come to light which makes the identification of Miss Reynolds's long lost piece a certainty, and it is here reprinted in facsimile from the 1785 printing. In the Introduction to the present facsimile reprint, on page vii, the statement is made that on pages 25 and 49 of the text someone had made minor changes in wording in ink. Unfortunately, in preparing the facsimile, the photographers carefully removed what appeared to them blemishes on the text, so that the remarks in the Introduction were rendered unintelligible. In the interests of accuracy, although of very little importance, the facts might be

noted here: on page 25, line 17, "could" is changed to "would"; on page 49, line 15, "of" is deleted.

Since all 18th-century scholars are interested in forgery (and who is not?), we feel able to mention Theodore Ehksam's *Major Byron: The Incredible Career of a Literary Forger*, published by Boesen, though it actually does not have to do with our period. The technical problems of forgery, however, are the same in every century, and in Ehksam's detailed analyses we may all secure hints for similar investigations.

Other recent books to be listed are: a study of Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, by Frank Livingstone Huntley (Univ. of Michigan Press); *The Prologues and Epilogues of John Dryden*, edited by William B. Gardner (Columbia Press); *Capability Brown*, by Dorothy Brown (Country Life).

### Miscellaneous News Items

Because he is constantly receiving letters about it, Joseph Wood Krutch suggests that we warn our readers concerning the so-called *Diary of a Surgeon in the Year 1751-52*, by John Knyveton, and edited by Ernest Gray (1937). The work is not to be accepted as wholly genuine. We never have been certain how much of the interesting material about Johnson is fiction and how much a composite reworking of other material; but it must not be taken seriously by unwary beginning Johnsonians. We might add that we would welcome further information about it.

It is news when the sports writers go 18th-century. Here is a headline from the *New York Post*: "Lo, the Poor Injun When Lopat Hurls." Do you think Pope would understand?

A special exhibition of books about Lichfield and Lichfield writers is being arranged by Percy Laithwaite as part of the Festival of Britain. It is to be held in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral.

Rufus Putney, as Chairman of Group VIII of the M.L.A., is preparing a program having to do with the 18th-century novelists and their work. Write to him if you are interested.

We are glad to receive from A. Lloyd-Jones the printed 21st annual report of the Johnson Society of London.

In reading Orville Prescott's review of Wilmarth Lewis's *Collector's Progress* in the daily *Times* we were brought up sharp by the statement that Lewis possessed 5,000 original or photo-

stat letters out of the estimated 7,000,000 which Walpole wrote or received." Immediately we began figuring to see how many he must have been dashing off during every waking hour. Alas, our head began to swim and we desisted. Perhaps you will make an accurate estimate. In any event, Walpole is unquestionably the champion letter writer of all time.

### Swift Studies

In our last number we mentioned the appearance of Volume VII of the *Prose Works of Jonathan Swift* -- *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*. A copy having now reached us, we wish to comment again on the authoritative and interesting Introduction by Harold Williams, who establishes conclusively Swift's authorship of the piece and explains its importance as history. While the *History* will never be popular in literary circles, it is valuable, at last, to have a scholarly modern text. Congratulations again to Herbert Davis, the General Editor.

Clarence Kulischeck (Baker Univ.) wonders why we have never taken note in *JNL* of the latest biographical work on Swift, Evelyn Hardy's *The Conjured Spirit*. Yet in his own comments on the book, Kulischeck infers the reasons for our silence. He writes: "As the sub-title, 'A Study of the Relationship of Swift, Stella, and Vanessa,' indicates, it is still another investigation of the eighteenth century's most publicized 'mystery.' That this subject should continue year after year to attract the attention of professional biographers, novelists, and scholars is the more remarkable when one considers that nothing essentially new and illuminating has been added to the story for well over a century. The tantalizing announcements of startling new discoveries invariably turn out to be merely new interpretations of old gossip instead of, say, the irretrievably lost letters of Esther Johnson or something equally momentous. Like her predecessors, this latest of Swift's biographers draws significantly on the poems for corroborative evidence. Perhaps no body of literature has been so meticulously combed through and at the same time so neglected as literature as Swift's poems."

A suggestive article, which disagrees in part, we might add, with one of our own pet theories, is Robert C. Elliot's "Swift's *Tale of a Tub*: an Essay in Problems of Structure" in *PMLA* for June.

## Some Recent Articles

Although not in very close touch with any library these days, we pass on a few recent articles which we have seen: Clifford Leech, "Restoration Comedy: the Earlier Phase" in *Essays in Criticism* for April; J.R. Moore, "Gildon's Attack on Steele and Defoe in *The Battle of the Authors*" in *PMLA* for June; Ian Watt, "Robinson Crusoe as a Myth" in *Essays in Criticism* for April; W.H.G. Armytage, "George Berkeley, Atlantean" in *Queen's Quarterly* for Spring 1951; Ernest Tuveson, "Space, Deity, and the 'Natural Sublime'" in *MLQ* for March.

Students of Pope will be particularly interested in Dean Mace, "The Doctrine of Sound and Sense in Augustan Poetic Theory" in *RES* for April. In passing, we might mention Bonamy Dobrée's excellent review of the two new volumes of the Twickenham Pope edition, in *Spectator* for March 30.

Vincent Freimark, "Joseph Trapp's Advanced Conception of Metaphor" in *PQ* for October 1950; Raymond D. Havens, "A Theft in *The Annual Register*" in *PQ* for October; Arthur Waldhorn, "Thomas Chatterton, De Burgham, and John Dix" in *N&Q* for March 17; Paul Fussell, Jr., "William Kenrick's 'Courtesy' Book" in *PMLA* for June; Raymond D. Havens, "Ann Radcliffe's Nature Descriptions" in *MLN* for April.

Two important long reviews should be mentioned, both in *MP* for May: Henri Roddier's of J.R. Foster's *History of the Preromantic Novel in England*; and Donald F. Bond's of the two recent editions of Christopher Smart's poems. This last is of great importance for anyone interested in Smart's work.

### A Johnson Anecdote

Donald Greene (Saskatchewan) sends in the following:

"In A.A. Luce's fine biography *The Life of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne* (London, Nelson, 1949), there is an anecdote of Johnson that doesn't seem to have made its way into the Johnson literature:

In 1752 he [George Berkeley, second son of the Bishop] entered Christ Church, Oxford, where he proved himself a young man of expensive tastes, who kept horses and entertained. He met Dr. Johnson at Oxford, so his widow records; Dr. Johnson

made fun of the Bermuda project, and George made his excuses and walked out of the room; and subsequently refused Johnson's repeated requests for permission to write a Life of the Bishop. A member of the party remonstrated with Dr. Johnson, who replied, "Why, I think the Bishop's scheme no bad one; but I abused it to take down the young gentleman, lest he should be too vain of having had such a father." (p. 183)

Luce's source is the preface to *Poems by the late George Monck Berkeley, Esq., LL.B., F.S.S.A.* (London, 1797), pp. ccl-ccliii. The book is rare; Luce used the copy at Canterbury Cathedral, where the George of the anecdote was a Canon. It was edited by Mrs. Eliza Berkeley, widow of George junior and mother of George Monck, who also wrote the 630-page preface, which must set some kind of record for length of prefaces. The poems themselves occupied only 178 pages.

Greene concludes with the suggestion that perhaps Mrs. Berkeley's long-winded Preface might well be searched by 18th-century scholars for other anecdotes.

### Coming Books

Pope scholars will be looking forward to W.L. MacDonald's *Pope and His Critics* (Dent); and Bonamy Dobrée's *Alexander Pope* (Sylvan Press).

Among the new titles listed for Croft's Classics are: Congreve's *The Way of the World*, edited by Henry Ten Eyck Perry; and Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, edited by Katharine C. Balderston.

From the Princeton Univ. Press in July will come Lyman H. Butterfield's two-volume collection of *The Letters of Benjamin Rush*. This is a companion piece to *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush*, and will contain over 650 letters written by Rush from 1761 to 1813. About two-thirds of them are believed not to have been published before; and of the remainder many have been only partially or inaccurately printed. This edition should establish Rush as one of the interesting letter-writers of the period, as well as one of the most versatile citizens of the early republic.

Mat. Lewis's *The Monk*, edited with a commentary by Louis F. Peck, is to be issued next October in a limited edition by The Grove Press, Woodstock, N.Y.